

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 DHAHRA 00515 200836Z  
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W  
-----097187 200837Z /13

P R 200610Z APR 78  
FM AMCONSUL DHAHRAN  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6185  
INFO AMEMBASSY JIDDA

C O N F I D E N T I A L DHAHRAN 0515

EXDIS

FROM THE AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: MASS, PINT, SA, ET  
SUBJECT: SITUATION IN ERITREA

1. APRIL 19 I MET IN RIYADH WITH PRINCE SAUD. IT WAS MY FIRST MEETING WITH HIM SINCE MY RETURN FROM WASHINGTON. FOREIGN MINISTER EXPRESSED DEEP SAUDI CONCERN FOR CUURENT SITUATION IN ERITREA SAYING ETHIOPEANS, CUBANS, AND RUSSIANS WERE PREPARING MASSIVE LAND, SEA, AND AIR ATTACK AGAINST ERITREA. HE SAID TROOPS WERE ALREADY STAGING IN TO MASAWA AND ASMARA. HE ADDED SOVIET FLEET WOULD SUPPLY LOGISTICAL AND FIRE SUPPORT TO SEA INVASION. SAUD WENT ON TO SAY THERE WOULD BE SEVERAL FORUMS IN UPCOMING WEEKS - I.E. ARAB SUMMIT IN KHARTOUM AND ISLAMIC FOREING MINISTERS CONFERENCE IN DAKAR WHERE SAUDI ARABIA COULD TAKE DIPLOMATIC INITIATIVE AGAINST THOSE INVOLVED IN MILITARY ACTION. HE SAID HE AWARE THAT SEVERAL AFRICAN COUNTRIES (UNIDENTIFIED) ARE PREPARED SUPPORT ERITREANS POLITICALLY BUT WILL ONLY DO SO IN RESPONSE U.S. WILLINGNESS TO PARTICIPATE IN POLITICAL ACTION TO RESOLVE CONFLICT. HE ASKED FOR ANY APPRAISAL U.S. HAS OF CURRENT SITUATION. HE ASKED SPECIFICALLY WHAT U.S. REACTION WILL BE TO SOVIET AND CUGAN INVOLVEMENT IN LARGE SCALE MILITARY ACTION IN ERITREA. HE ASKED THAT IN SPIRIT OF CONTINUING DIALOGUE ON  
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ISSUES AFFECTING BOTH GOVERNMENTS THAT WE PROVIDE HIM INFORMATION ON OUR POSITION BEFORE MAKING IT PUBLIC.

2. COMMENT: PRINCE SAUD SHOWED HIS FRUSTRATION WITH WHAT HE PERCEIVES IS OUR INACTION IN HORN OF AFRICA. WHILE SAG CLEARLY EXERCISED OVER HORN OF AFRICA, CRUCIAL WORRY IS THAT LACK OF U.S. RESPONSE WILL EMBOLDEN SOVIETS TO REKINDLE DHOFFARI

REBELLION AND SUPPORT PDY ATTEMPT AT SUBVERSION IN YAR. HE CLEARLY  
WANTS TO KNOW AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE WHAT OUR REACTION WILL BE  
TO MASSIVE FIGHTING IN ERITREA SO AS TO BETTER PREPARE HIS OWN  
GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE. WOULD APPRECIATE DEPARTMENT'S GUIDANCE ON  
THIS QUESTION AND URGE DEPARTMENT TO SHARE WITH SAG ANY PUBLIC  
POSITION WE INTEND TO ADOPT SHOULD SUCH A SITUATION DEVELOP AS  
SAUDI HAS DESCRIBED.  
BUSHNELL

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** Z  
**Capture Date:** 01 jan 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** MILITARY EQUIPMENT, REPORTS, TROOP DEPLOYMENT, POLITICAL SITUATION  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 20 apr 1978  
**Decaption Date:** 20 Mar 2014  
**Decaption Note:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 20 Mar 2014  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1978DHAHRA00515  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Expiration:**  
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**SAS ID:** 2906884  
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**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** SITUATION IN ERITREA  
**TAGS:** MASS, PINT, SA, ET, UR, CU  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
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**Review Markings:**  
Sheryl P. Walter  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
20 Mar 2014  
**Markings:** Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014